

Urban District  
OF  
OTTERY ST. MARY.



**Annual Report**  
OF THE  
**Medical Officer of Health**  
FOR THE  
**YEAR 1925.**

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E. WHITE, Printer, OTTERY ST. MARY.




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# Urban District of Ottery St. Mary.

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To the Chairman and Members of the Ottery St. Mary Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my Third Annual Report, dealing with matters concerning the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of your District for the year 1925.

## NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

The area of your District comprises 10,008 Acres, and the population at the last census was 3,638. Since 1921 the population has increased slightly—and it is now estimated to be about 3,658.

The most populated part of the District is in the Valley of the Otter, between East and West Hill, but the population is increasing each year in the outlying parts of the area.

The number of Inhabited Houses in the District is 1,003, and the average number of inmates per house is just under 4.

The Rateable Value is £24,524 15s., and the sum represented by a penny rate is £58 5s. 3d.

The Neighbourhood is largely an Agricultural one. There are no occupations in the District having a prejudicial effect on the health.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

### (a) BIRTHS.

The number of Births registered in the District for the year 1925 was 63, giving a Birth Rate of 17 per thousand of the population.

Of these 35 were males, and 28 females. There were no illegitimate births.

### (b) DEATHS.

The number of Deaths registered in the District for the year 1925 was 53, and the number of transferable deaths of residents in the District who died elsewhere 10; giving a total of 63 Deaths, and a Death Rate of 17 per thousand of the population.

Of these Deaths 36 occurred in persons who had reached the age of 65 and upwards, and 13 had reached the age of 80 and upwards.

5 Deaths occurred from Cancer during the year, giving a mortality from malignant disease of 1.4 per thousand of the population.

2 Deaths were due to Tuberculosis, giving a Death Rate from Tubercular Disease of 0.6 per thousand of the population.

There were 13 Deaths from Cerebral Haemorrhage. There was one death from Scarlet Fever, and one from Puerperal Septicaemia.

2 Deaths occurred among Infants under one year of age, giving a Death Rate from Infant Mortality of 32 per thousand Births. Of these 2 however one was the direct consequence of child-birth, as the Infant only survived one hour.

There were no Deaths from Measles or Infantile Diarrhoea.

There were no Deaths from Whooping Cough.

There were no Deaths from Congenital Syphilis.

## **POOR LAW RELIEF.**

£1,105 16s. 1d. was paid out in Poor Law Relief during the year.

46 families were in receipt of Medical Attendance by the Poor Law Doctor, and in addition 23 persons received Medical Treatment, who were not otherwise in receipt of parish relief.

9 persons from the District were admitted to Honiton Infirmary during the year 1925.

## **GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.**

For General Sickness the needs of the District are well served by the Ottery St. Mary Cottage Hospital.

During the year 131 In-Patients have been treated at the Hospital: the average duration of their stay being 20½ days. 126 Operations was performed during the year.

120 Accidents were treated during the year. Some of these were serious, but the majority were due to minor injuries.

A New Wing, containing Two more Wards, and extra accommodation for the staff is now near completion, and will be in use shortly.

## GENERAL SICKNESS.

Illness during the year has been of a General Character, and there has been no particular epidemic of note.

There are no Hospitals for Small Pox, Children's Ailments or Maternity Cases in the Area.

Infectious Cases such as Diphtheria, Typhoid Fever, Scarlet Fever are sent to Whipton Isolation Hospital at the Council's expense. Special Ambulances are sent from Whipton to remove any Infections Cases to the Fever Hospital. In exceptional cases the Council supplies a Trained Nurse to attend to any Infectious Case which is too ill to be removed to an Isolation Hospital.

Cases of Tuberculosis come under the County Tuberculosis Officer, and are removed to Ivybank in Exeter, or to Hawkmoor Sanatorium if considered advisable. In suitable cases the County supply shelters for open-air treatment at home.

Cases of Venereal Disease are recommended for treatment at the Special Clinic provided in Exeter.

For non-infectious and accident cases there is now an Ambulance in Honiton staffed by the Red Cross Society.

The Public Health Staff of the Council are a Medical Officer of Health and a Sanitary Inspector.

Both are part-time Officers.

There are now Two Trained Midwives practising in the Area, one for maternity work and the other for general nursing.

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES of the AREA.

There is a constant and ample Water Supply to all parts of the Town. The Water is collected into high and low level Storage Tanks from Springs arising on East Hill. There are at present 625 Houses in the Area served by this Water Supply.

In the Rural Area the Houses obtain their Water from Springs, Wells and Streams.

During the year a Public Water Supply has been provided in the middle of the village at Tipton St. John. This consists of a Well about 12 feet deep made of concrete tubes to prevent surface contamination. The supply comes from 5 Springs—from which it is estimated that 720 gallons of Water per hour can be obtained. An analysis showed that the Water was of very good quality.

There is no pollution of rivers and streams in the Area.



The Town Sewerage and Drainage consists of a main drainage scheme of a sewer leading to a septic tank from which the sewage passes over 6 filter beds to the irrigation area. During the year the sewers have become choked on a few occasions, and have received immediate attention. When discovered defective house drains have been repaired by the owners.

New filtering material is to be supplied to the 6 filter beds in the early Spring.

In the Rural Area some of the houses are provided with cess-pits.

In the Town Area the Houses are provided with Water Closets, but in many cases one W.C. serves two or more houses.

In the Rural Area the majority of the Houses are provided with Pail-Privies, the contents of which are disposed of by the occupiers on their gardens or allotments.

A tabulated statement of the number of Sanitary Conveniences of each type in the District, and particulars as to the number of conversions from one type of convenience to another, are appended in the Sanitary Inspector's Report.

The insufficient Closet accommodation has received the attention of the Council, and this defect is being remedied.

### SCAVENGING.

In the Town Area a Twice-weekly Collection of House Refuse is carried out by the Council's workmen, who also during the year has performed satisfactorily the work of Cleansing the Street Gullies and Catch-pits.

In the Rural Area no Public Scavenging exists.

## WORK OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR.

The Sanitary Inspector reports to me as follows regarding the work and nature of Inspections made by him during the past year.

645 Inspections were made during the year, comprising :—

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	...	...	15
Bakehouses	...	...	11
Factories and Workshops	...	...	26
Slaughter-houses	...	...	150
Dwelling-houses under the Housing and Town Planning Act	...	...	50
Miscellaneous Inspections for the Detection of Nuisances	...	...	382

11 Notices were served. These were all Preliminary Notices and were complied with.



## HOUSING.

### 1. GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS.

It is estimated that 50 more Houses are required in the Area. The Council has a scheme for the erection of 12 New Houses.

### 2. OVERCROWDING.

There is no real overcrowding in the District.

### 3. FITNESS OF HOUSES.

The Houses in the Working-part District are mostly of the Cottage Type. The general character of defects existing in some of the Houses are deficient surroundings light and air, back-to-back Houses, Dampness and insufficient Closet Accommodation.

In one case a closing order has been made. Similar orders might be issued in other cases, but until new houses are built there is no other alternative accommodation to offer the present tenants.

Cases of unfitness are dealt with as they occur.

There are no unhealthy Areas in the District.

## HOUSING STATISTICS for the YEAR 1925.

*Number of New Houses erected during the year :—*

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b))	10
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :	
(i) By the Local Authority ... ..	0
(ii) By other bodies or persons ... ..	9

### 1. *Unfit Dwelling Houses.*

Inspection—

(1) Total number of Dwelling-houses inspected for Housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ..	50
(2) Number of Dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulation, 1925 ... ..	50
(3) Number of Dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ..	1

- (4) Number of Dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 40

2. *Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.*

- Number of defective Dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ... 0

3. *Acting under Statutory Powers.*

A.—Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... 0
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—
- (a) By owners ... 40
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close 0

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- (1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... 0
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :
- (a) By owners ... 0
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

C.—Proceedings under sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders ... 1
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... 1
- (3) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit ... 0
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... 0
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... 0

## INSPECTION and SUPERVISION of FOOD.

### (a) MILK.

There is a good Milk Supply in the Area.

The Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops have been periodically inspected and found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

No license has been granted for the sale of Milk under special designation, classified as in the Fourth Schedule to the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923.

No refusal or revocation of registration of retailers or of licenses for graded Milk has been made.

No bacteriological examination of samples of graded and other Milk has been made.

### (b) MEAT.

The Slaughter-houses have been inspected and found to be clean and well conducted.

31 Seizures of Carcases and Organs were made during the year—mostly for flukey livers.

All Animals slaughtered in the District are inspected by the Meat Inspector. Condemned meat is buried in quick-lime and disinfectants at the Council's expense.

## PRIVATE SLAUGHTER HOUSES IN THE AREA.

	In 1920.		In Jan., 1925.		In Dec., 1925.
Registered	6	...	6	...	6
Licensed	6	...	6	...	6
	—		—		—
	6		6		6

Other Articles of Food exposed for sale have been periodically inspected, and no cause for complaint found.

There are no Offensive or Dangerous Trades in the District.

## PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the past 5 years Infectious Diseases have been mostly of isolated sporadic nature, with the exception of the year 1923, when there was a serious epidemic of Scarlet Fever in the Area.

In all cases of an Infectious nature searching investigations are made to discover, if possible, the source of the Infection. Diphtheria Antitoxin when necessary is supplied at the Council's expense. Diphtheria contacts have frequent throat swabs examined, and all positive cases are removed at once to Whipton Isolation Hospital. After removal a thorough disinfection of the premises is carried out and disinfectants are freely provided.

Bacteriological specimens, such as throat swabs, sputum, blood, etc. are sent to the Public Health Department in Exeter for examination.

There has been no Small Pox in the Area. Influenza has been prevalent from time to time, but it has not been of a serious type. The mortality from this disease has been low.

The Schick and Dick Tests for Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever respectively have not been used in the Area, and recently developed artificial methods of immunisation against these diseases have not been tried.

There have been no cases of Encephalitis Lethargica and no "return" cases of Scarlet Fever have been discovered.

### NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) DURING THE YEAR 1925.

Disease.				Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Small Pox	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1	...	1
Diphtheria	...	...	...	5	5	...
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	1	...	...
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	2	2	1
Erysipelas	...	...	...	1	...	...

## TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE PERIODS.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0.....								
1.....	...	1						
5.....								
10.....								
15.....								
20.....	...	3						
25.....	...	1						
35.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
45.....								
55.....								
65 & up'ds	1	...	...	...	1			
Totals...	1	5			1			1

## PUBLIC HEALTH (Prevention of Tuberculosis) REGULATIONS 1925.

No Cases have come to my knowledge of Tuberculosis Employees in the Milk Trade.

### MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Centre has made good progress during the year.

The Centre was open on 48 occasions, and the total number of attendances was 351, giving an average of over 11 attendances at each opening.

There were 31 Children on the Register during the year. 4 Lectures were given and were well attended.

There were 3 expectant mothers on the register, and they made 34 attendances.

There were Two Cases of Puerperal Fever during the year—one of which ended fatally. The cases occurred within a few days of each other, and as both were attended at their confinements by the same midwife, the midwife was at once prevented

from attending any more confinement cases until a thorough investigation into the origin of the cases had been determined. An enquiry was held by the Central Midwives' Board in London, and the midwife was put on probation in another district for 6 months.

Other illnesses such as Measles, Whooping Cough, etc. have been of a general character, and require no special comment.

## OPHTHALMIA NEANATORUM.

	CASES.			Vision Unim- paired	Vision Impaired	Total Blind ness	Death
	Notified	Treated.					
		At Home	In Hospital				
	1	1					
Total	1	1		1			

Appended to my Report will be found the Report of the Sanitary Inspector, including the tabular statements required by the Minister of Health.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

F. N. SIDEBOTHAM, M.A., M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

March, 1926.





## **SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT,** **for the year ending 31st December, 1925.**

DEAR SIR,

Herewith I submit for your consideration my Annual Report.

### **SCAVENGING.**

The Scavenging and Collection of House Refuse within the Town Area, including the Cleansing of Street Gullies and Catch-pits, continue to be satisfactorily performed by the Council's own workmen.

The Cleansings are removed by direct labour by means of the Council's own team labour.

### **SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.**

The Sewers have become choked on a few occasions and received immediate attention. Where discovered, Defective House Drains have been repaired by the Owners.

The Septic Tanks and Filter Beds at the Council's Sewage Disposal Works have acted fairly satisfactorily, a good deal of attention having been paid to the automatic lifts and fittings generally. The six Filter Beds now need to have the old filtering material removed and new material supplied. This is to be done in the Spring.

In the Town Area the Houses are provided with water Closets, and in the Rural Area with Pail Closets.

Many of the Water Closets in the Town Area serve two or more Houses.

### **INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

During the past year all premises upon which cases of Infectious Diseases have occurred have been disinfected, as and when instructed by you, by means of spraying and fumigation with Formalin Lamps.

Disinfectants have been freely supplied to all requiring the same.

### **NEW BUILDINGS.**

During the year the Council approved Plans for the erection of 10 Dwelling-houses.

The Buildings have been inspected from time to time during construction.



## NUISANCES.

Four hundred and twenty General Inspections were made for the Detection of Nuisances.

Number of Nuisances found	...	11
Number of Nuisances abated	...	11
Number of Houses partly re-drained		13
Defective Water Closets repaired	...	5
Accumulations of Refuse removed	...	6
Defective Roofs repaired	...	15
Preliminary Notices served	...	11
Statutory Notices served	...	0

## HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING.

The majority of the Houses in the District are small, generally having only two bedrooms, and ill-suited for persons with large families. A great number of the Cottages are old and dilapidated. Rents are generally low.

About 50 more Houses are needed, as there is a great shortage of Houses in the District. A few Houses are being erected by private enterprise, with a Government subsidy.

The Council are preparing a scheme for the erection of 12 Houses of the non-parlour type.

## DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND WORKSHOPS.

Periodical inspections to the Cowsheds, Dairies, &c., have been made, and generally they were found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

## FOOD AND MEAT INSPECTION.

Periodically I have inspected Articles of Food and Meat exposed for sale.

31 seizures of carcasses and organs were made, the organs were principally Flukey Livers.

## FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND BAKEHOUSES.

The Bakehouses, Workshops, &c., have been inspected from time to time, and were found generally to be well kept. No underground Bakehouses exist.

## SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

General visits of inspection were made to the Slaughter-houses in the district.

A few instances of Offal and Manure remaining for too long a period on the premises were discovered and orders given for its prompt removal.

Generally the Premises were well kept.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

The Town Area is supplied with water from the Council's Reservoirs, consisting of high and low level storage reservoirs.

All parts of the Town have had an ample supply of Water throughout the year, only a few complaints of shortage being received by me ; this was soon remedied.

The Houses in the Rural Area obtain their Water from Springs, Wells, and Streams.

Appended are the tabular statements required by the Ministry of Health.

I am, Sir,

Yours obediently,

E. ROGERS, M.I.M.C.E. and A.R.S.I.,

*Sanitary Inspector.*

18th February, 1926.

Dr. F. N. Sidebotham, M.A., M.D., &c., Medical Officer  
of Health, Ottery St. Mary.



*Particulars as to the Number of Sanitary Conveniences of each type in the District, and particulars as to the number of Conversions from one type of Convenience to another.*

YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1925.

Number of Privies with fixed receptacles	...	19
Number of Privies with movable receptacles	...	68
Number of Fresh Water Closets	...	444

CONVERSIONS.

Privies fixed to moveable receptacles	...	0
Privies with fixed receptacles to Fresh Water Closets	...	0
Privies with fixed receptacles to Waste Water Closets	...	0
Privies with moveable receptacles to fresh w.c.'s	...	0
Privies with moveable receptacles to waste w.c.'s	...	3
Waste Water converted to pail privies	...	0

*Particulars required under Article 7 of the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910.*

INSPECTIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1925.

1. Number of Dwelling-houses inspected under and for the purpose of Section 17 of the Act of 1910	...	50
2. Number of Dwelling-houses which on inspection were considered to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	1
3. Number of representations made to the Local Authority with a view to the making of Closing Orders	...	1
4. Number of Closing Orders	...	1
5. Number of Dwelling-houses the defects in which were remedied without the making of Closing Orders	...	40
6. Number of Dwelling-houses which after the making of Closing Orders were put in a fit state for human habitation	...	0

7. General character of Defects found to exist :—  
 Deficient surroundings, light and air.  
 Back-to-back Houses.  
 Dampness.  
 General structural defects.  
 Insufficient closet accommodation.

*Particulars required by the Act XX. (16) of the General Order of the Local Government Board (13th December, 1910).*

WORKS CARRIED OUT FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
 31ST DECEMBER, 1925.

Six hundred and forty-five Inspections were made during the year, comprising :—

- 15 Dairies, Cowsheds, Milkshops, &c.  
 11 Bakehouses.  
 26 Factories and Workshops.  
 150 Slaughter-houses.  
 50 Dwelling-houses, under the Housing and Town Planning Act.  
 382 Miscellaneous Inspections for the detection of nuisances.  
 11 Notices were served, 11 being complied with. These Notices comprised 11 Preliminary Notices.





